

Claims

1 1. Method for controlling network devices via a MMI, **characterized by** the
steps of:

generating and at least partially displaying a hierarchical view of icons of all
devices (23-35; 76a-76j; 101-127) connected to the network and/or services
5 (24a-24c, 42, 43, 43a-43g, 44, 45, 46a-46o; 47-74, 75a-75h) corresponding to
the devices, and

coupling each of said icons with operating functions of the associated device
(23-35; 76a-76j; 101-127) and/or service (24a-24c, 42, 43, 43a-43g, 44, 45,
46a-46o; 47-74, 75a-75h), respectively, wherein said devices and/or services
10 are operable from said hierarchical view.

2. Method according to claim 1, **characterized by** recognizing a
sub-network (21; 1-6) being integrated in said network via a bridge (128-131)
and integrating said sub-network (21; 1-6) as an icon in said hierarchical view
15 of icons similar to said devices and/or services, wherein said icon assigned to
said sub-network (21; 1-6) has a higher order than icons assigned to devices
(23-35) and/or services (24a-24c, 42, 43, 43a-43g) of said sub-network.

Sub A1
20 3. Method according to claim 1 or 2, **characterized in that** a device (23-
35; 76a-76j; 101-127) and/or service (24a-24c, 42, 43, 43a-43g, 44, 45, 46a-
46o; 47-74, 75a-75h) is operable by drag and drop operations or by cut/copy
and paste operations.

25 4. Method according to claims 1 or 2, **characterized in that** a device (23-
35; 76a-76j; 101-127) and/or service (24a-24c, 42, 43, 43a-43g, 44, 45, 46a-
46o; 47-74, 75a-75h) is operable via context sensitive menus (46; 75, 76)
shown in said hierarchical view after selecting the icon associated with said
device and/or service.

30 5. Method according to claim 3 or 4, **characterized in that** after operation
at least one control signal and/or at least one data stream is sent from one de-
vice (101; 106; 108) to at least one other device (115; 102; 105).

6. Method according to anyone of the preceding claims, **characterized in**
that said hierarchical view of icons is organized according to predetermined

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1 user-selectable rules.

7. Method according to claim 6, **characterized in that** said hierarchical view of icons is organized depending on the kind of said devices (23-35; 101-127) and/or sub-networks (21; 1-6) connected to the network.

Sub A2
1 8. Method according to claim 6 or 7, **characterized in that** said hierarchical view of icons is organized depending on the kind of services (47-74, 75a-75h) being available in correspondence with said devices (23-35; 76a-76j; 101-127).

10 9. Method according to anyone of the preceding claims, **characterized in that** the AV/C protocol is used for controlling the devices (23-35; 76d-76j; 102-110, 114, 116-119, 121-126) and/or services (24a-24c, 42, 43, 43a-43g, 44, 45).

15 10. MMI for controlling network devices, **characterized in that** it is adapted to perform the method as defined in anyone of claims 1 to 9.

20 11. Computer program product comprising computer program means adapted to execute all steps defined in anyone of claims 1 to 9, when said computer program product is executed on a computer (101).

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